

# Holiday Inn & Suites – Ottawa

111 Cooper Street  
Ottawa, Ontario

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**“Accessible  
Customer Service  
is not a lot of work  
– it is easier than  
you think”**

Peter Wilson, General Manager  
Holiday Inn & Suites, Ottawa

## Our Side of The Story

Located in the trendy Golden Triangle District of downtown Ottawa, Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites - Ottawa Downtown is a well-appointed hotel in close proximity to the MacDonald Cartier International Airport (YOW), the Ottawa Train Station, and mere steps from the Rideau Canal. The management and staff at this city centre hotel are also leaders in mentoring each other to ensure their customer service policies and approaches are inclusive for all of their guests.

“We have a great staff, with a hospitable mentality,” says Peter Wilson, General Manager of the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites – Ottawa Downtown. “We have monthly department meetings and each department is responsible for planning a discussion. Each unit is asked to talk about different situations, for example, how to approach people, how to deal with different scenarios that may include a guest with a disability.”

As the General Manager, Peter ensures there is a clear communication trail for each department; even before a guest arrives. Reservation staff ask visitors if they have any special needs, if anything can be done to make their stay easier and more

comfortable. This attention to detail might include Peter having a conversation with the guest before they arrive to ensure their needs are accommodated.

### Our Quick Tips

- **Staff Training at All Levels and with all departments is key**
- **Use Your Vendors**

“Including the new AODA customer service standard has been a very manageable process, says Peter. “For example, our staff has learned that if someone is visually impaired, you ask if they can take your arm rather than grabbing their arm, this is not complicated. Employees have commented that accessible customer service is not a lot of work, that it is easier than you think.”

Recently, the Holiday Inn and Suites won an industry award for their accessible suites and credits using their vendor’s knowledge and expertise to stay abreast of new accessibility technology.

“Vendor relationships are valuable,” says Peter. “They help design and supply materials for accessible rooms so we do not hesitate to consult them about what we should be changing. They are a retailer, however they also give us advice to try things that are cost effective. Consequently, our vendors make it easier for us to be accessible and customer friendly.”

When asked to summarize his thoughts on accessible customer service Peter explains it this way; “We are in the service industry and if a guest is coming to our city, our mission is to make their stay the best possible and this includes making their stay more relaxed and enjoyable. It’s just good customer service so why wouldn’t we?”



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